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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: BASRAH GOVERNOR AND HIS BROTHER ON ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AND  
DUBAI TALKS ON NEW IRAQI GOVERNMENT

REF: (A) BASRAH 135, (B) BASRAH 112

CLASSIFIED BY: Ken Gross, Regional Coordinator, REO Basrah, DOS.

REASON: 1.4 (b)

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11. (C) Summary. Basrah Governor Mohammed al-Wa'eli and his brother, Ismail, told the Regional Coordinator (RC) in separate meetings on October 2 that the governor survived an assassination attempt on September 30 while returning to Basrah from Najaf. Both brothers blamed the Serious Crimes Unit (SCU) of the Iraqi police as being the culprits. The governor said he plans to see Prime Minister al-Maliki in a few days and will request that Basrah security committee head Major General Ali Hammadi be replaced. The governor and his brother also gave details about a meeting with three Iraqi politicians in Dubai and the proposed formation of a political bloc that would oust the current government. End Summary.

12. (C) On October 2, Basrah Governor Mohammed al-Wa'eli and his brother Ismail told the RC that gunmen attached to the SCU attacked the governor's motorcade in Basrah on September 30 and wounded two of his bodyguards. Ismail said that they noticed a heavier than normal police presence as they entered Basrah, and a group of eight vehicles attacked the governor's convoy of eight cars. Two members of the governor's security detail were wounded, and firing allegedly continued as the governor's motorcade sped through the city. After the governor was safely home, Ismail said that General Hammadi came to the governor and said that he knows who carried out the attack and promised that they would be arrested. The governor asserted that the assailants were rogue elements of JAM with links to Iranian intelligence. He complained that no one had been arrested yet and doubted if General Hammadi would put himself in a vulnerable position by moving against the attackers. Ismail said that the prime minister called the governor and "promised to form a committee to investigate the incident."

13. (C) The governor said that he plans to meet the prime minister in a few days and will recommend that General Hammadi be replaced as chief of the Basrah emergency security committee since he is ineffective and weak. (Note: The governor views the security committee as an usurpation of his powers and cooperates with it only reluctantly. See Ref A). The governor stated that the security committee needed an "independent and strong" individual to run it and averred that he would do much more to combat militia forces if he exercised sole authority over security in Basrah. His brother was more explicit and said that when the governor meets with the prime minister he would ask that security authority be vested solely in him.

14. (C) The governor and his brother also discussed a trip to Dubai they made two weeks ago with Nadeem al-Jabiri and Sheik Abbas al-Zaidi, a close advisor of Sheik Yacoubi. While in Dubai, the group met with Salih al-Mutlaq, Adil al-Abadi, and Sheikh Muzahim, and the latter three politicians made a pitch for Fadillah to join a new political group that would form a new government. The governor said that the Fadillah members wanted a stable Iraq and the current government, with the coalition's support, presently offered the best hope for that. They said that Fadillah declined to join this rival political grouping. Both the governor and his brother said that there was substantial support in the UAE for the formation of a coalition that would unseat the present Iraqi government.

15. (C) Comment. The governor and his brother's account of the alleged assassination attempt is only one of many. Other variations of the story are that the assassination attempt was really an altercation between the governor's motorcade and a police convoy that grew out of a traffic dispute or that the governor manufactured or made up the alleged attack to bolster his efforts to unseat General Hammadi and to assume control over Basrah security. There is no question that the Serious Crimes Unit is corrupt and is involved in assassinations and other criminal activities; many of them are rumored to be sponsored by the governor or his brother. (See Ref B for more on the governor's brother.) Yet another possibility is that elements of the SCU are out of the governor's control, and he now wishes to eliminate them by alleging they are responsible for the assassination attempt. The governor and Ismail are correct in saying General Hammadi is ineffectual, but to supplant him with the governor would only strengthen the governor's hand against his enemies. This would not result in an improvement in security for Basrah. End comment.

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